

APPLICANTS: Gelardi et al.
U.S. Serial No.: Not Yet Assigned
US EXPRESS MAIL NO. ED579338618US
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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert the following new Paragraph on page 1, immediately following the title:

-- RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority to U.S. Application Number 60/486,160, filed on July 10, 2003, the entirety of which is hereby incorporated by reference. --

Please amend the Background of the Invention as follows:

-- BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to improvements in the field of product packaging, and in particular to advantageous aspects of an improved product package with a latching end cap.

Description of the Prior Art

One type of product packaging that is currently in use includes a tube, or sleeve, having openings at both ends. The item to be packaged is loaded into the tube, and each end of the tube is sealed by inserting a closely fitting endcap into the opening. A number of different techniques have been developed to hold the endcaps in place, including glue, tape, staples, and the like. However, these techniques suffer from a number of drawbacks, including the amount of labor and materials required to construct the package, the ~~esthetic~~ aesthetic appearance of the finished package, and the firmness of the attachment between the endcaps and the tube ends. --

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Please amend the Summary of the Invention as follows:

-- SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The above issues, and others, are addressed by the present invention, one aspect of which provides a container including a tube having a rim at one end defining an opening and an endcap including a channel that is shaped to receive the tube rim. ~~The , the tube includes~~ including at least one latching aperture positioned such that when the tube rim is seated in the channel, the latching aperture is contained within the channel. ~~The , the endcap further~~ includes including a latching member that engages the latching aperture when the tube rim is seated in the receiving channel. The latching member includes a ~~sloped surface for deflecting~~ shaped so as to deflect the tube rim to allow the tube rim to be slid into position over the latching member. The endcap further includes a first guide ~~fin~~ assembly on a first side of the latching member and a second guide ~~fin~~ assembly on a second side of the latching member. ~~Each , each~~ of the first and second guide ~~fin~~ assemblies ~~includes including~~ a sloped surface shaped to deflect the tube rim in a direction opposite to the deflection of the tube rim by the latching member when the tube rim is slid into position in the channel, and to maintain the engagement of the latching aperture by the latching member when the tube rim is seated in the channel, wherein there is formed in the wall opposite the first guide assembly a first cavity and wherein there is formed in the wall opposite the second guide assembly a second cavity the first and second cavities providing clearance respectively for the first and second guide assemblies. A further aspect of the invention is directed to a method for packaging an item in a container having a tube and latching endcap.

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Additional features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent by reference to the following detailed description and accompanying drawings. --